

After the challenges of isolation and the pandemic, this year's Mardi Gras is a chance for us to reunite, reconnect, and celebrate what truly makes New Orleans, New Orleans—the love, the peace, the culture, and the energy of its people.

While I am in D.C. for House business and for the President's State of the Union address, my heart is at home as the Zulu float turns on Jackson Avenue and the oceans of people scream and yell: Throw me something, mister. Our hearts are full of joy.

My heart is handing out coconuts at the Zulu parade as we speak, although I am physically in Washington, D.C.

People attending balls, costuming, and letting everyone be themselves is what Mardi Gras is all about. It is a time of love, a time of expression, and a time of cultural explosion.

Happy Mardi Gras to one, happy Mardi Gras to all, have a safe and happy Mardi Gras. Enjoy the beautiful weather.

For all of you watching, I invite you all to come to Louisiana, have a slice, have a piece of Mardi Gras. No matter where you are or where you are from, let's show each other some love this season.

And as we say in Louisiana: *Laissez les bon temps rouler*.

AMERICA'S ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLYDE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight one of the most forceful and significant pieces of leverage on the world stage that President Biden surrendered on his first day in office: America's energy independence.

Later today the President will brazenly attempt to rewrite history by hailing his so-called leadership amidst the horrific and heartbreaking war unfolding in Ukraine while ignoring the self-inflicted crises he has imposed on the American people. Yet no amount of spin, lies, or deflection can hide the damage that Biden has done to our great country—particularly through his failed, destructive, and reckless energy policies.

On day one he killed the Keystone XL pipeline destroying 11,000 American jobs and delivering a crushing blow to domestic energy production. Shortly after, President Biden infamously green-lit the Nord Stream 2 pipeline—handing Vladimir Putin a victory long before his Russian troops ever stepped foot into Ukraine.

Throughout the first year of Biden's Presidency, the current administration embarrassingly begged OPEC to produce more oil while stalling and even halting oil and gas permits here in the United States.

To further weaken our position on the world stage, President Biden withdrew U.S. support for beneficial energy projects around the world, increasing

our dependence, as well as our allies' dependence, on foreign adversaries. President Biden removed U.S. support from the Eastern Mediterranean gas pipeline that would have connected Israel's offshore gas reserves to Europe.

In spite of lauding this project as a new opportunity and a geopolitical win-win back in 2014 when Biden was Vice President, now President Biden claims his priorities lie with moving away from fossil fuels in order to promote green energy and renewables. Some may believe President Biden simply had a change of heart, but this would be naive. Instead, he has dangerously appeased the far-left flank of his party by fully embracing Green New Deal garbage.

Enough is enough, Madam Speaker. It is abundantly clear that energy independence is national security. And through every solitary energy policy, the Biden administration has chipped away at our ability to independently fuel our Nation, thereby damaging our national security.

Due to President Trump's powerful efforts, the United States was recently energy independent just a year ago. Yet thanks to President Biden's utopian Green New Deal fantasies, we have lost our energy independence. So rather than strengthening domestic production by having every energy industry firing on all cylinders, we are left purchasing oil and gas from other countries, like Russia. Yes, Russia.

In fact, the United States buys over 635,000 barrels of oil every day at over \$103 per barrel. That is over \$65 million every solitary day that we are sending to Russia filling Putin's war coffers in the process. I stand with patriots boycotting Russian vodka, pouring it out all over the streets, supporting the Ukrainian people.

But why on Earth are we not boycotting Russian energy to put America first and really hit Russia where it hurts: in the pocketbook?

Mr. President, we must immediately cease purchasing Russian oil and fully unleash domestic energy production.

Ahead of his State of the Union Address tonight, I urge President Biden to rescind existing regulations and reverse harmful executive orders that undermine our energy independence. Restore oil and gas production by swiftly authorizing vital leases and permits, and abandoned radical climate rules and policies that obstruct our ability to have domestic energy production roaring at full throttle.

Unfortunately, based on the President's most recent record, I fully expect him to double down on his disastrous energy agenda. Just this weekend, Press Secretary Jen Psaki comically claimed that we need to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, on oil in general, and we need to look at other ways of having energy in our country and others.

As a military veteran, I can assure the White House that renewable resources are meaningless in fueling

military equipment on the battlefield and winning a war.

To no one's surprise, recent reports claim President Biden will tout his energy policies tonight and request this body to deliver legislation to achieve so-called clean energy that promotes climate action. What a disappointment.

There is still time for the President to cease this capitulation to the far left, stop putting \$65 million every day into Vladimir Putin's war chest, and put Americans first by fully empowering and unleashing domestic energy production.

CELEBRATING THE ATHLETES FROM BEARDEN HIGH SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BURCHETT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, on February 6, Bearden High School's dance team brought home another national championship from the Universal Dance Association's National Dance Team championship. The team earned its third national championship in the large varsity Game Day Division, the sixth in team history.

Routines in the Game Day Division are focused on school spirit and crowd engagement. Teamwork is crucial in these choreographed competitions, and athletes must be on the same page if they want to win. Bearden's dance team won this competition by working together and perfecting a motivating, effective routine during Bearden Bulldog athletic competitions.

Members of this national championship winning team are Abigail Abrams, Olivia Roddy, Jordan James, Ella Klenck, Julie Horn, Maddie Taylor, Cadance Eastman, Kenzie Bankes, Mallory Simpson, Ruby Fisher, Leah Cho, Ella McLaughlin, Marian Mitchell, Mallory Haskins, Eli Keziah, Lana Nelson, Avery Duncanson, and Reagan Honeycutt.

The team's leadership includes head coach Hannah Keathley, assistant coaches Natalie Adkins and Sydney Schriver, technical coach Kathryn Brasfield, choreographer Katie Fear Lane, and team sponsor and high school teacher Rebecca Nutter.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to celebrate this group of athletes from Bearden High School, my alma mater. Our community is proud of your continued success on the national stage.

And go Bulldogs.

Recognizing Tennessee Volunteers Legend Gus Manning

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize somebody who really needs no recognition at all but is somebody who is very dear to me. He is a good friend of mine. He is a Tennessee Volunteer legend, Gus Manning. He is turning 99 this July, and I wanted to take a few moments to recognize Gus' life and distinguished career here on the House floor.